

Will Gas Curb Hurt Theatres?

Manager Prevents Theatre Panic

Next to Hitler, our nomination of the skunkiest human of all time is the creep on legs who sent in a false alarm to the Midtown Theatre, Bloor street, Toronto, last Saturday night. The very thought of what might have happened is appalling. The Midtown is one of the city's largest district houses.

The theatre was crowded, the lobby full and a line stretched into the street for "The Corsican"

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Gallup Check On Patronage?

The likes, the dislikes, the reasons for coming, the reasons for staying away, of motion picture audiences, actual and potential, will be polled weekly if George Gallup and the motion picture producers can come to a satisfactory agreement.

The plan, sidetracked several times by the Hays Office, has been placed in the hands of the producer's lawyers committee fol-

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Perly to Kenwood

Al Perly has returned to his spot of some years ago as manager of the Kenwood Theatre, Toronto. He leaves the Community, Hamilton. Dick Freeman, who managed the Kenwood, takes over the remodelled Pix, formerly the Aster, Toronto. They're all Twentieth Century houses.

Thompson Bereaved

Fred Thompson, manager of the Rex Theatre, London, Ontario, suffered the loss of his wife, Georgina, last week. The late Mrs. Thompson was interred in Mount Pleasant cemetery. The trade extends Fred its condolences.

General Optimism Prevails On Gas Rationing Effect

Will gas rationing affect theatre patronage?

Exhibitors are much concerned with the effect of the new regulations on the box-office. Canada's largest circuit has had men stationed in its largest houses who have been

Whad'ya Mean, 'Never the Twain'?

The closeness of war to India will affect motion pictures there too. Hindu entertainment isn't confined to temple dancers, as we used to think. There are more than 2,000 movie houses in the Jewel of the Empire.

The folks can't get enough of pictures. Each show lasts five hours and includes two feature length films, a news-reel, a couple of Mickey Mouses and a Fitzmaurice traveltalk.

And whad'ya think? They have their own variation of bingo! It's played with beads. Also a good fan magazine called "Filmindia."

Maybe Sir Stafford Cripps has a clause or two about priorities and clearances in his pouch, along with other items dealing with Indian freedom.

PRC Convention

All PRC franchise-holders will get together in Hollywood on May 4th for the convention which lasts until the 7th.

Grierson's Salary

John Grierson, Dominion Film Commissioner, has been paid \$25,905 since he came to Canada for the government and took charge of the National Film Board. In 1938-39 he received a fee of \$3,650. Later he went on salary.

The Grierson salary was revealed in answer to R. H. McGregor, Conservative.

Selective Service And the Industry

The recent selective service rulings, under E. M. Little, have full application to the motion picture industry and officials would do well to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with them.

Under the regulations, after March 23rd, 1942, the hiring of male applicants for work in any occupation associated with entertainment, recreational or professional service, including theatres, film agencies, motion picture com-

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Disney May Join UA

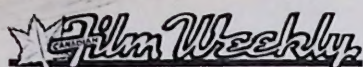
There is talk that Walt Disney may release in the future through United Artists. Reports have it that he will not renew with RKO.



Leo Coyle, manager of the Granada, St. Catharines, Ontario, shown with part of the 1,900 pounds of scrap brought in by his Victory Legion of youngsters and presented to the St. Catharines Victory Bag Association. The previous week yielded 1,600 pounds and the week before 700.

**SKOURAS TO HEAD
20th CENTURY-FOX?**

Spyros Skouras, head of National Theatres, which has 20th Century-Fox connections, is favored by rumor to succeed the late Sidney E. Kent as president. The studio's board of directors doesn't meet until April 15th but the trade is debating its choice.

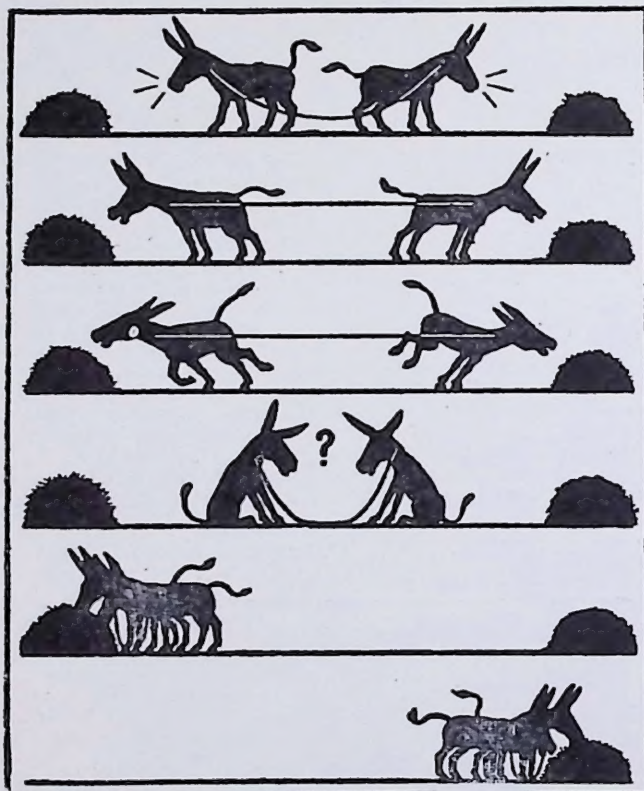


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"A Picture is Worth 10,000 Words"

That's an old Chinese saying. We'd be the last to deny it. Here's a picture. We dedicate it to Independents of every ilk and association, to distributors and exhibitors, and to governing bodies. Moral: don't be a jackass—or do be a jackass, or something.



Abbot & Costello

Universal's latest Abbott and Costello comedy, "Pardon My Sarong," has been launched under the direction of Erle C. Kenton, with Virginia Bruce and Robert Paige in the romantic leads.

Maria Montez, as a South Sea Island princess, has an important featured role and other principals include Leif Erikson, William Demarest, The Four Ink Spots, Tip, Tap and Toe, Tagalong, Elyse Knox, Marie McDonald, Kathryn Adams and Jennifer Holt.

Eddie Albert In

Eddie Albert, who is set to star in "Lady Bodyguard" at Paramount, may also do the title role in "Merton of the Movies" at the same studio, according to present production plans.

Breen May Return

There is a move to induce Joseph Breen, formerly of the Hays Office and now with RKO, to return to his old outfit.

All the major studios have agreed that they would like to see Breen back but MGM. The big studio was irked when Breen left his post.

It is expected that opposition would be smoothed over.

Andersons Are Loyal

When the news got out that Republic had changed the name of the fifth columnist in "Remember Pearl Harbor" from Murphy to Anderson, the Andersons sent a mass protest. Eleven hundred of them in one town petitioned the studio to think twice about it.

The Murphys put up the first kick.

Optimistic On Gas Rationing

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will draw the ex-pleasure motorists and encourage the steady-going habit.

Discussions with managers and supervisors reveals interesting slants on the eventual results. One manager claimed it would affect the downtown theatres adversely while boosting the neighborhoods. The manager of a district house refuted this with, "If they get on a street car at all, they'll go right downtown." Many moviegoers, he said, pass up the closest houses to them because they've seen the picture and take a street car to get to the edge of their own areas.

On the other hand, it is contended that car-owners won't drive downtown to see a movie, but a good many who work there will stay downtown, meeting the wife pal or sweetheart in front of the theatre. Wives who shop downtown and meet hubby for the drive home won't do that but will join hubby for dinner and a show. Crowded street cars on the way home are another factor in encouraging the downtown sojourn.

The seeking for a cool place to spend a couple of hours, instead of riding, may take some of the pain out of the usual summer slump.

Of lasting benefit, some think, will be the renewed interest in the movies by people who up till now could take them or leave them alone. Picture houses depend on the steady patron for the bulk of the business and an increase in the regular habit through force of circumstances is not to be sneezed at. This has been sought for many years through the various kinds of institutional advertising.

The downtown houses may have to provide small services for shoppers, such as places to check parcels, particularly perishable goods. And children, perhaps, since junior can't be left alone while pa and ma see a show. Washrooms will have to be kept in the best of order for a fast slicking-up by people who stayed downtown. And a more homey attitude on the part of theatre attendants may have to be developed.

Theatres in habitations surrounded by rural areas don't figure on any unpleasant results either. Farm folk aren't improvident with gas and the regulations have been good to them. Also each barn usually has some spare tires, picked up cheaply, which hang from the walls. Much of rural patronage comes from miles out of town but a visit to the movies is usually combined with the essential and usual weekend shopping.

Selective Service And the Industry

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panies, etc., is prohibited, unless the applicant has a release from a national selective service officer or holds a certificate of exemption from compulsory military training and is also exempt from essential service on farm projects.

Single men and childless widowers up to 30 years of age are to be selected for compulsory training and service in Canada. It is further proposed that employers may be asked to release professional technicians for war work.

It is pointed out that from now on no male person should be permitted to accept employment in any theatre unless the applicant can prove by evidence that he is less than 17 or more than 45 years of age, or holds a certificate of honourable discharge from the armed services, or a certificate of rejection on the grounds of physical unfitness, or holds a permit authorizing employment signed by a national selective service officer.

There are certain prohibitions governing the transfer of an employee from one industry to another, and employers will be required to furnish information about all persons engaged for or released from restricted occupations.

The Unemployment Insurance Committee has issued regulations requiring the registration of all employees in each theatre, whether subject to Unemployment Insurance or not. It is announced that cards or forms, together with a letter of instructions, will shortly be issued to every theatre. These forms or cards, when completed, were to be returned to the local Unemployment Insurance Commission by April 1st. If you have not received instructions or forms please get in touch with your local Unemployment Insurance Commission Office immediately.

New Unemployment Insurance Books should have been delivered to all theatres by this time and old books surrendered. If this is not so check this with your local Insurance Commission also.

Whatever the effect in individual cases, it is agreed generally that the total attendance and receipts for the Dominion will not suffer.

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Manager Prevents Theatre Panic

(Continued from Page 1)

Brothers." A panic and great tragedy might have resulted from the criminal act had it not been for the quick wit of manager Ernie Warren.

Warren was busy in the lobby when the firemen, bearing distinguishers, dashed in and headed for the theatre proper. He had to use physical force in preventing the earnest smoke-eaters from plunging down the aisles and frightening the audience. The fireman were restrained until the captain in charge arrived. He listened to reason.

The possibilities of the situation were clear to the captain, who agreed that any sensible theatre manager would summon the reels in a quieter way if he had discovered a fire in the same circumstances. Meanwhile the street grew black with people and traffic snarled for several blocks.

The call had been reported as coming from the Midtown switchboard and the firemen required a report. At Warren's suggestion they changed their revealing clothes to mufti, entered the theatre and found nothing to justify a visit.

Manager Ernie Warren is to be praised for his quick thinking. He still catches his breath when he thinks what might have happened.

There is a lesson here for all managers. The firemen learned plenty too about the best way to go about things—and that all fires are not alike.

This was the third of such calls. The same thing happened to the Uptown and Shea's during the last year. The police are looking for the criminal. If they catch him they ought to flog him, lock him up and throw away the key.

Fire Destroys New Palace, Verdun, Que.

Several firemen were injured when a fire gutted the Palace Theatre in Verdun, Quebec, last week.

The afternoon performance had just started when the fire broke out, but the few persons present marched quietly into the street.

The blaze raged for two hours before being brought under control.

A. Bahen, manager of the theatre, said he did not know the cause of the fire, nor could he give an estimate of the damage.

The theatre had been renovated last year, with new seats and fixtures installed. The theatre had a capacity of 500.

The entire body of the theatre was a total wreck, as fire ate through the upholstery of the chairs and scorched the walls.



That's Telling 'Em!

A while back this column told of some of the adventures of Del Goodman, Paramount's Canadian chief, during his years in the East. Del slings a string of Oriental lingos in a smattering, pat-tery way; he can read and write laundry marks and lottery tickets that look like chicken tracks to anyone else; and he can handle chopsticks without poking out an eye.

Del made a point of recording things that seemed unusual to him. In his files he has what the *Manchurian Daily News* wrote of De Mille's "Cleopatra." Headed "Story Well Cranked," it will make our word-splurgers weep:

"The story is cranked from a scene of struggle of power between Cleopatra and his brother Ptolemy, in Egypt.

"The critic has no space to hear repetition in these columns that the content Cleopatra is too popular to insist it.

"You, the fans, certainly be much all of a jump if you see the De Mille for sets of several thrilling scenes of battle on in the sands and in the sea, the Egyptian Armies fighting against Romans and of dancing by Egyptian girls with swish and swirl and revolving through grand marble halls and on the sumptuous barge to the swish of gully slaves."

Gee, I wish I could write like that! Maybe our screen scribes will steal a little style from the lad and add to the gayety of our daily reading.

Letdown

The other day this chronicler got a hurry-up call to hustle to the office of Miss Arna Mann. Figuring on a sprig or two of news, I did. The uncertain tones of "Happy Birthday to You" greeted me. On a desk was a lovely cake and sundry packages. Surprise!

The natal day plunder, however, was for Miss Mann. My over-enthusiastic manfriday, Master Mark Burman, no doubt trying to ingratiate himself with the boss, told the Twentieth Century celebrants about my birthday. They merely extended their party to include me, that's all. Nice of them.

Oh, yes, Miss Mann sprayed a little of her gift perfume on me (whoops) and kicked in a slice of the cake.

Mark is hereby demoted to fourth assistant associate vice-editor.

Changeovers

William Saroyan, who panned Hollywood, is back there producing and writing for MGM. He found the exact words for the popularity of "How Green Was My Valley," which he liked. "It has respect," Bill said, "for the dignity of the human being" . . . Charlie Ray, the old silent star, has occupied himself during the quiet years with writing a book of movie terminology. Maybe he can find a new word for "stinkeroo" . . . A Japanese propaganda station reported that the USA was on the verge of revolt and, referring to Benny and Allen no doubt, said: "Even their radio comedians are feuding" . . . Hit of a recent Midtown stage show was usherette June Barrett, an accomplished vocalist who delivered in uniform. The staff tendered June a bouquet and a steady patron sent in a present. . . . Film folk are polishing up the bi-cycles, what with car crowding and gas rations. Jack Melzer and Sylvia Alpert are the latest.

Sure I Read the Comics

I was indulging in my favorite intellectual pastime last week-end and came across the funny called Mickey Finn. Mickey's Uncle Phil dropped into a theatre to see "The Return of the Fat Man." And sat right in front of one of those theatre pests who saw the picture and insists on telling his companion all about every new twist before it happens.

Uncle Phil finally blew his roof, plunked the pest in the eye and got pinched. The judge fined him ten dollars, then called him into the chambers.

"Here's your ten dollars back," he said. "I go to movies too!"

Remember that next time you say there's no justice.

Gallup Check On Patronage?

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lowing a private poll of the studio heads by Dr. Gallup.

America's cross-examiner No. 1 approached the studio bigwigs with a technique worked out during his two years as a private movie inquisitor for RKO and Sam Goldwyn. Back in 1940 he was hired by George Schaefer, RKO executive, to conduct surveys in the study of motion picture habits and tastes, and to advise the studio in the selection of stories, casts, and titles for forthcoming productions. To conduct these surveys, the Audience Research Institute was established in Princeton, N. J.

At about the same time, Gallup was also engaged in a double feature preference inquiry carried out at the request of Sam Goldwyn.

With this movie background, plus his cross-section survey technique, Gallup was able to impress the Hollywood producers. The information acquired in the planned weekly polls will be passed on directly to the studio heads, guiding them in their selection of stories and casts.

A Gallup Poll, hitherto restricted to national and international affairs, is a decisive step away from the industry's reliance on box-office receipts as the indicator of public preference. Gallup will get down to specific issues, and will furnish specific answers.

'Woman' Blue Ribbed

The National Screen Council has awarded "Woman of the year," MGM production starred in by Spencer Tracey and Katharine Hepburn the Blue Ribbon, its annual honor.

This is the second year Hepburn has won it and the seventh successive year for Tracey.

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Digest of Reviews

Fox

ROXY HART

Payoff: A piece of bloody whimsy but definitely not for juvenile understanding. A chunk of time out of the "era of wonderful nonsense" that will bring nostalgia to those who remember prohibition high-jinks. Full of fun and noise.

Story: Ginger Rogers gets a bum rap for murder and decides to take it for the sake of publicity as a showgirl. This decision is induced and aided by reporter Lynn Overman and shyster Adolphe Menjou. George Montgomery is the cub reporter who loves her. It's all an excuse for cocked-hat comedy and caricatures of life and the people of those days. Others here are Nigel Bruce, Phil Silvers, Sara Allgood and William Frawley.

Sizeup: Will draw its best laughs from those who remember the period but will amuse the rest to a high degree.

NIGHT BEFORE THE DIVORCE

Payoff: Attractive domestic comedy for grownups.

Story: Lynn Bari is one of those do-it-all dames who can lick her husband at everything from flipping coins to golf. Joe Allen, Jr., is the runner-up mate who revolts. Mary Beth Hughes and Nils Asther provide temporary obstacles to the eventual reunion. Most of the story deals with Bari's attempt to get Allen, Jr., back into harness.

Sizeup: Married folks will get a kick out of this treatment of a common problem. Others will watch it with an understanding eye. The kids will have blank looks.

Universal

WHAT'S COOKIN'?

Payoff: Good musical diversion with better-than-B production.

Story: Billie Burke is the opera-mad wife of Charles Butterworth, sponsor of a radio program. She wants opera. Robert Paige, her conductor, wants swing. A bunch of kids want a job. Gloria Jean is Burke's niece, forced to do her classic bidding but with a heart of swing. It all works out.

Sizeup: Full of lure-names of the radio and jive trade, such as the Andrews, Woody Herman and his band, etc. Also some new and highly-talented youngsters. Screen names are good too: Leo Carillo, Franklin Pangborn and Jane Frazee.

Columbia

CANAL ZONE

Payoff: A doozer for lovers of air stuff. Otherwise a good routine reeler.

Story: Chester Morris is a chief instructor who has trouble a-plenty with one of his fledglings, John Hubbard, who has play-boy kinks in his cranium. Hubbard goes after Morris' girl, Harriet Hilliard. Hubbard saves Morris after a crash, bows out of the romance and is redeemed.

Sizeup: The aviation stuff guarantees plenty of juvenile and air fan trade.

New York Revivals

Beau Geste—1939 adventure story; G. Cooper, R. Milland.
Great Lie—1941 drama; B. Davis, M. Astor, G. Brent.
His Girl Friday—1940 comedy; C. Grant, R. Russell.
King of Kings—1929. Life of Christ; H. B. Warner, J. Logan.
Lady Eve—1941 comedy; Fonda & Stanwyck.
Lost Horizon—1937 Film dramatization of Hilton's novel; R. Colman, J. Wyatt.
Meet John Doe—1941 drama; G. Cooper, B. Stanwyck.
Metropolitan—1935 operatic film; Tibbet.

Ramona—1936 technicolor romance; D. Ameche, L. Young.
Rembrandt—1937 historical drama; Chas. Laughton.
Scoundrel, The—1935 satiric comedy; Noel Coward.
Secret Agent—1936 spy melodrama; J. Gielgud, M. Carroll.
Star is Born—1937 romantic comedy drama; F. March, J. Gaynor.
Submarine D-1—1937 drama; G. Brent, P. O'Brien.
They Knew What They Wanted—1940 drama; C. Laughton, C. Lombard, W. Gargan.
U-Boat 29—1939 spy melodrama; C. Veidt, V. Hobson.

Vitagraph

THIS WAS PARIS

Payoff: Realistic melodrama of the war that is interesting most of the way and exciting at some points.

Story: Presents a picture of Paris and its human conflicts just before and after its fall. There is a leading fifth columnist, a newspaperman, an intelligence officer and an American gown designer. The newspaperman, Ben Lyon, predicts the course of things. Ann Dvorak is the gown designer whom Griffith Jones, British Intelligence, suspects while being in love with her. Robert Morley is the Quisling. They're all part of the picture of Paris—and the film is just that—a picture of Paris and why it fell. There is a strong and capable supporting cast.

Sizeup: Fits in well with current tastes.

Professor Whacks Wartime Humor

The character of Hollywood war humor comes in for a considerable trouncing from Professor Robert Gessner, chairman of the department of motion pictures at New York University. He says that the Hitler menace is no joke and the film-makers ought to stop treating it as such.

Professor Gessner singled out "To Be or Not To Be" as an example of a humorous approach which is psychologically wrong. The fact that the picture is popular with large numbers of patrons the teacher considers to be proof that it is "all the more dangerous."

Says Professor Gessner:

"We have the example of a troupe of poor players who strut their brief hour on the Warsaw stage and are heard again behind whiskers and stage uniforms as master minds who outwit the (supposedly) dumb Gestapo. A ham Hitler who isn't even convincing to his stage producer is able, however, to fool Hitler's personal guard.

"Such preposterous scenes, and there are many in the film, jar violently with the bits of excellent comedy. There is a need and place for comedy, but bombed and devastated Warsaw is not the place.

"Inasmuch as the film is presented as comedy, the Nazi sequences are doubly insidious; the Gestapo chief becomes no more harmful than Ford Sterling, the Keystone heavy. One expects to see bullets explode about the dancing feet of our hero. We are assured that false hair and make-up will win the war. Dr. Goebbels and his staff, working day and night to distract us from a total

war effort, could not hope for a better idea.

"We have to give the Gestapo the respect that we would give a rattlesnake.

"We are shocked on the day the Normandie was demolished to step through a theatre door into a region where a celluloid barmaid is outwitting the best brains of the Gestapo in Paris.

"German battleships were able to slip up the English Channel while (in film) an Oxford archaeologist with the aid of whiskers and a pair of marbles in his cheeks could walk into Berlin Gestapo headquarters and run them around like sheep.

"Pearl Harbor caught us napping, Singapore collapsed—but fear not; a Parisian piano player or a Broadway weisenheimer or a Washington stenographer can outwit Goebbels any day and one Boy Scout is a match for Hitler's Elite Guard!"

The professorial blast has drawn little support. Ottawa and Washington house the smartest propaganda minds on the continent and it isn't likely that off-the-track propaganda would escape them. "The Great Dictator" would fall into Professor Gessner's classification of thoughtless humor and it was greeted by press and public with loud acclaim.

The Nazi soldier, in dress and mein, tries to carry out the superman-monster myth and Hollywood has done much to blow this conception away with gusts of laughter. The Nazis sell fear long before they appear. Hollywood's constant fun-poking at Nazi seriousness helped the British, Canadian and American people to smile instead of quiver at the sight of the strutting German.

The McDowells Meet at Movies

The best human interest story to come out of a motion picture theatre in a long time originated through the awareness of J. M. Robertson of the Capitol Theatre, Victoria, B.C. It appeared in the Victoria Daily Colonist and dealt with the visit of T. A. McDowell, father of Roddy McDowell, to the theatre to see his son on the screen.

Mr. McDowell, an officer in the Merchant Marine, is 45 and ran a garage in London before the war. A number of his shipmates accompanied him. Wrote The Colonist:

"People turn up in strange places in wartime, when anything can happen and often does. It was one of those rare coincidences that brought together a roving sailor father and his celebrated son in Victoria last night.

"They met in the Capitol theatre. The father, T. A. McDowell, an officer in the British Merchant Navy, was there in person; the son, Roddy McDowell, one of Hollywood's outstanding juvenile actors, was on the screen.

But for Mr. McDowell, who never dreamed of the surprise that awaited him there, the occasion brought all the thrills of a personal meeting. He sat through the picture 'How Green Was My Valley' and though he's seen it before he enjoyed it every minute.

"Haven't seen the boy for more than a year," he recalled after the show 'I didn't know I was coming here myself and I certainly didn't know that Roddy's picture would be showing.'

"As a gesture to the lad's father and his mates in the Merchant Navy, the manager, J. M. Robertson, arranged for them to see the show.

"Mr. McDowell recalled that 20th Century Fox executives invited the officers and crew of his ship to a special preview of the picture in Hollywood. 'They put on the show at a moment's notice,' said Mr. McDowell. 'I thought that was a fine compliment to the British Merchant Navy.'

"Naturally, he is proud of his boy. He produced a wallet and showed a photo of the twelve-year old actor and his sister, Virginia, aged thirteen.

"She's in the picture, too," he said, 'though she only has a small part. She's as talented as Roddy.'

Rowe Aussie Choice

R. L. Rowe has been appointed Australian general manager for 20th Century-Fox succeeding Ernest Turnbull, who left to become top director of Hoyt's circuit, which 20th controls.

Rowe was head of sales at Sydney.

ECHOES and REFLECTIONS

Travelogue

ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, on Portland and facing Wellington, is today a public park. Beneath its surface rest forever an unknown number of valiants. Set apart as a military cemetery in 1794 by Lord Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada, it was used for sixty years.

There are legends about the old place. One says that Lord Simcoe buried his youngest daughter here. Another concerns a cavalry officer whose passion was fine horses. Recalled to England, offers were made for six of his best animals. The thought of them being in alien hands pained him. They say he shot each and buried it in St. John's.

In the centre is a monument topped with a bust of Lord Simcoe. On it are the names of regiments which fought in the War of 1812, such as the Glengarry Fencibles and the Coloured Corps and Indians. This verse meets the eye:

"Dead in the battle—dead in the field—
More than his life can a soldier yield?
His blood has burnished his sabre bright;
To his memory, honor; to him good-night."

Sad Array

ONCE each few feet of this earth had its wooden or stone sentry. But, as the years passed, a growing town moved further away. Other cemeteries were established and this one fell into disuse. Its ghostly tenants neglected, the army of grave-markers became disorganized under attacks of time and weather. Then the stones were removed and the face of St. John's decorated with the eye-pleasing green one sees there now.

A few stones, salvaged out of sentiment, remain. Like tired old warriors they lean disconsolately against a fence in a far corner.

Here and there one sees the outline on the fence of a stone fallen in a vain defense against the elements—a record of a record, soon to disappear and be eternally forgotten. Nature's epilogue to a drama of lives. The stones are like the ghosts of men; the outlines the ghosts of ghosts.

A Tragedy of Yesteryear

OF all that once marked this ground but a scant dozen remain. One still legible is "Sacred to the Memory of Zachariah Mudge, Esq'r," a lieutenant who was secretary to Lieutenant-Governor General Sir J. Colborne. Mudge died in 1831, aged 31 years.

This stone is the graven echo of an old tragedy. Zachariah Mudge, history records, sought and found death by his own hand. A member of an old family and a striking figure of a soldier, he was much admired. He was a bachelor. The cause of his suicide is still a mystery.

A trick of fate this, that he who sought the end before his time should have outlived, in recorded memory, his comrades who desired—and were denied—the fullness of life.

A Strange Reunion

THE stones are vanishing in an almost timeless disintegration. Small crumbs lie about that have separated from the stones and reached closer to the bosom of the earth, as though to join their human predecessors.

Where are the others of these that once stood side by side, ranks unbroken? Gone from the face of the earth. United by nature with those whose lamps they kept lit here.

A reunion, this. A strange reunion. A reunion in the dust.

EACH year, when the wind has delivered the last of its white cargo and the earth yields its first feeble smile, I go there. And meditate for a moment on the impermanence of things and the brevity of man's mortal stay.

—Frank Filman

Six 12.05's in Oshawa Yearly

Permission will be granted the three movie theatres of Oshawa to hold midnight shows in the opening hours of public holidays falling on Mondays, if the recommendations of the committee of the whole council is passed by City Council at their next regular meeting. This ruling will affect approximately six holidays in the year.

The recommendation followed representations of the theatre owners, and will be subject to the filing with the city of a letter signed by all local theatre companies agreeing that such shows will be confined to six per year. Last year midnight shows were halted in Oshawa by agreement between city authorities and theatre managements because of the alleged advantages enjoyed by youthful crime artists of the city who used midnight shows as their excuse for being abroad at all hours of the night.

Elgin, Ottawa, Has Six in Armed Forces

Theatre personnel has experienced many changes since the war began. Many theatres have replaced half their staffs because of enlistments, in some instances several times.

The Elgin, Ottawa, Twentieth Century's first-run house in the Capital, has six ex-staffmen in the armed forces:

Bert Guest, former head usher, who joined the RCAF two years ago and is stationed at Ottawa.

John Charron, doorman, joined up a year ago and is in the army and stationed at Ottawa.

Milton Budd, doorman, left the Elgin about six months ago and is now stationed at Fingal with the RCAF.

Jack Parker, doorman, joined the navy a year ago and is now on the Atlantic riding a corvette.

Jack Dempsey, operator, left for the RCAF and is at Toronto.

The latest is George MacDonald, head usher, who has joined the RCAF and has reported at Galt.

Theatre ushers and doormen make good soldiers, being smart-looking and disciplined.

Check Amateur Films

Censor Byron Price of the USA has ordered a thorough check on all films and stills held by amateur cameramen entering and leaving the United States. The simon-pure photographers may take unexposed films only to Canada.

Vacationists with cameras are the big problem.

Reagan Plays Buffalo Bill

Convinced by Ronald Reagan's performance in "Kings Row" that he is destined for top-flight stardom, Warner Bros. will give him the stellar role in "Buffalo Bill," an epic film of the old West based on the career of William F. Cody, noted scout. The production is being planned on a basis that will make it one of the most important Warner pictures of the year.

The picture will be produced by Hal B. Wallis, and directed by Michael Curtiz, who has made most of the big-scale adventure films starring Errol Flynn. The screen play is being written by Walter Doniger.

"Buffalo Bill" is slated to go into production shortly after Reagan finishes his current assignment, "Desperate Journey," in which he co-stars with Flynn.

"Now, Voyager," next Bette Davis starring vehicle, will be directed by Irving Rapper, who recently completed "The Gay Sisters," starring Barbara Stanwyck and George Brent, with Geraldine Fitzgerald and Nancy Coleman. Rapper made his directorial debut only a year ago with "Shining Victory" and then did the memorable "One Foot in Heaven."

"Sweethearts of 1942" is the title of a new film musical planned by Warner Bros. which will be one of the most elaborate productions ever turned out by that studio.

Representing a wide departure from the usual musical film pattern, it will be calculated not only to entertain but also to provide a spur to national morale. Its theme will be the activities of the girls left behind by men serving in the armed forces.

Already selected for the cast are Priscilla Lane, Brenda Marshall, Alexis Smith, Jane Wyman, Jean Ames and Peggy Diggins. The screen play is being written by Hugh Wedlock and Howard Snyder. Robert Lord will be the producer.

McCormick to Hollywood

S. Barrett McCormick, director of advertising and publicity for RKO Radio, has left New York for Hollywood. This is his regular Spring trip and will be devoted to viewing the new 1942-43 pictures at the studio and to consultations with various studio executives.

Also leaving for Hollywood are Roy Disney, general manager of Walt Disney Productions; Antoinette Spitzer, Disney Eastern publicity director, and Jack Pegler, of Lord and Thomas.



WHAT with Spring Festivals, Peach Blossoms, and the odd Robin, we eagerly turn our backs on Old Man Winter.

Some of the boys are busy wielding their trusty paint brushes, and believe me, nothing gives that Spring atmosphere as much as a good old cleaning and a new coat of paint. Get your paint brushes out, boys, and get that Spring fever into your veins.

J. S. SMART of the Capitol, Cobourg, supplied the hockey ticket agencies with envelopes printed on his own Multistamp, reading "He Scores Again! George Formby singing new songs and into New Howlariou Mixups in 'Come on George!'"

Strike up the Band on your Spring Festivals, boys, we're waiting anxiously to hear all about it.

MEL JOLLEY, of the Columbia, St. Thomas, distributed 3000 teaser cards and ran a teaser ad in local women's paper in advance on "Birth Of The Blues." Also had a co-operative ad with music store. Obtained free orchestration from Music Corp. of America, also secured several music sheet title covers free from New York, using these for display purposes. He received a wire from Bob Chester, American bandleader, when he played Palais Royal, on opening of the picture. It plugged the picture and obtained fine free space in local paper. There were free plugs at a record club, and contests with music from the picture, with passes to lucky ones.

TOM MASCARO of the Capitol, Belleville put out a folder for his Spring Festival, the back page advertisement carrying half the cost. He had these folders numbered and each evening places a group of lucky numbers in the lobby. Anyone having a corresponding number is admitted free. He is receiving many favorable comments on his Spring Festival.

RALPH TIEDE of the Geneva Theatre in Orillia, had a teaser type ad in the paper. Two one column ads were side by side with heading, "So Hilarious . . . we just have to tell you twice."

MEL JOLLEY of the Columbia, St. Thomas, plugged a Laff Week program, ran teaser ads in advance stressing the Laff angle and had drug stores displaying cards as distributed by the Pepsi-Cola people featuring Bob Hope in each.

ERNIE WARREN of the Midtown, Toronto, sent out door-hangers reading "After Dinner tonight your screen menu is—". On the Formby picture, Ernie got a swell radio plug through Liberty Magazine, free of course. He also had a very attractive trick cut-out weeks in advance. This was a life size figure of Formby hanging with one hand to a lamp post and blowing a police whistle with the other hand outstretched in a stop position. A tieup was also arranged with a local radio dealer three doors away to play Formby hits over his outside Public Address system and spotted it with announcements of the coming picture. A small window display of his records and music was also granted.

In an attempt to get the Saturday patrons to come earlier, the cashiers in this theatre have been instructed when answering all telephone calls to add to the information given out, "We advise you to come early." Many of the callers thanked the girls for this advice and it has resulted in a greater number of admissions between the hours of six and seven on this important night.

"**SHANGHAI GESTURE**" now doing tremendous business at the Vanity in Windsor, has been plugged consistently with heralds, newspaper teasers, paper napkins distributed in restaurants, painted with the title in red Chinese letters. One of Bob's favorite stories is the one about the lady patron who told him that if the picture was not as dirty as she heard it was, she wanted her money back. Keep on slinging your mud, Bob.

F. MILEY, JR., the genial manager of the Granada in Nanawana, had a boy pushing a vacuum cleaner along the street with card reading "I am cleaning the streets with this vacuum cleaner—If you think this is funny you should see Abbott & Costello in 'Hold That Ghost!'"

ON "Face Behind The Mask" & "The Devil Commands" the Rex, London, had its heralds headlined with "Superman fainted when he saw this monstrous horror show"

DICK FREEMAN, the new manager of the Pix, Toronto, is right in his stride. He's all set for making his theatre one of the top houses. On leaving the Kenwood his staff presented him with a beautiful Ronson lighter. Keep that flame burning high, Dick.

STEVE McMANUS of the Bayview, Toronto, is running a contest for the month of April to be known as "The Manager's Birthday in April," the idea being to guess the date—the bait being a few guest tickets. Preparations are also being made here for dolling up the front of the theatre for the Spring Festival. Do we perchance hear the tinkle of bells, Steve, intermingled with all this Spring Festival? Will it be about June?

Hopalong, Cassidy McMannus, we're rooting for you.

KEITH WILSON of the Tivoli, Kingston, ran a Horror Show. He used the Faint check gag. These were large-sized tickets printed with copy, and at one end printed with large letters: "Faint Check." Also copy reading: "If you happen to faint during the showing of the Double Horror And Thrill Show at the Tivoli starting—bring this check back for admission to a milder show . . . We Dare You To See Them!"

IN Oshawa Stuart Gillespie had a peep show placed in a store window on "It Started With Eve." Nice idea, Stuart, keep 'em peeping.

DOUG PATTERSON, of the Opera House, Orillia, ran a Blonde contest on "Blondie Goes to College." He tied up with Woolworth's and two drug stores, arranging for a color window.

BOB BROWN, manager of the Vanity, Windsor, will celebrate his fifth anniversary with Twentieth Century Theatres and Vanity Theatres Limited on April 12th. The milestone finds him well and still going strong. "I would like," Bob says, "to express cordial greetings to my friends and associates during those inspiring years."

Congrats, Bob, old boy. Many happy returns.

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Hays Praises Movies' War Effort

Annual Report of President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America Praises Hollywood Participation, says Industry Slogan is: "Win the War Now! Everything Else is Chores."

Esquire Films Busy In New Offices

Esquire Films, headed by Archie Laurie and with Mervyn Goldstone as chief booker, is handling plenty of traffic in its new offices on the ground floor of 21 Dundas Square.

Some top-notch English pictures have been scheduled for release by Esquire, such as "This Man in Paris" and "It Happened to One Man." Busy right now are the prints of "The Middle Watch."

Being awaited in many quarters in Esquire's next George Formby's film, "Feather Your Nest." The current Formby, "On the Beat" is doing top business in some parts of the country and getting solid patronage everywhere. In St. John "On the Beat" played at the Strand and played nine days—the third picture in history of that theatre score in this way.

Available to exhibitors for music store tieups are Columbia records of "On the Beat" tunes and sheet music.

"Feather Your Nest" will be released in Eastern Canada in April.

Britain Sees Many 16 mm. Films per Week

British factory workers see at least 1,000 showings of 16 mm. movies each week, Tom Baird, who handles them for the British Ministry of Information, revealed. Baird is in the USA right now. The Ministry turns out about 200 films each year and 90 of these are of the smaller size.

Because of war difficulties the films must be taken to the audiences. Most are intended to keep up the public spirit and further the war effort. There are the usual showings in the theatres also.

A special screen writers committee works with the Ministry to see that the most important subjects are used in the best possible way.

'Outlaw' Still Snagged

Howard Hughes, "The Outlaw," which has had censor trouble for over a year, is slowly clearing it away. New York and Pennsylvania are still adamant but negotiations are on with them.

It may get a national release in the fall.

Will H. Hays, head of the Hays Office, devoted the greatest part of his annual report to the place of the motion picture industry in the war. Though the report is devoted to the United States, Canada, which had a two-year start in movie war effort, is affected by everything Hollywood does in that way. At the moment, arrangements are being completed for an exchange of army and war effort films between the two countries. Canadian war films of a more general nature, turned out by the National Film Board, enjoy great patronage in the USA.

"The role of the screen in the struggle in which our country is now engaged is, indeed, a major one," said Mr. Hays. "Its recreative, educational and inspirational functions cannot be exaggerated.

"No other medium can give its audience a greater sense of participation—and it is only through a universal sense of participation in the great task before us that our democracy will prove itself. There has never been a greater opportunity for the film art to exercise its powers as an instrument of freedom. The industry as a whole cannot fail to encourage the production of films which inspire the imagination, rekindles patriotism and fortify the will.

"At the very outbreak of hostilities, the motion picture industry raised the cry 'Win the war now! Everything else is chores.' And that will be its slogan, its self-appointed command, until the victory is gained, at whatever cost."

Recreation, education and inspiration have been the watchwords of the American motion picture industry during an era of peaceful development, the report said, and then it discussed each of these in terms of wartime needs.

The report told of the experience in England when, immediately on the outbreak of the war, motion picture theatres were closed down, both as an economy and as a measure of protection for civilian populations subject to air raids. But it was soon discovered in England that neither economy nor protection counter-balanced the deprivation of amusement. It was easier to ration food and clothing as a war measure than to withdraw from the people what some had thought to be only a luxury, not a necessity. Consequently the theatres reopened and remained open even during the period of the heaviest air raids.

The record of what happened in England, Mr. Hays said, is confirmed by ample evidence of the same situation in our own country. Provision of motion picture entertainment to our fighting men is one of the fundamental services of supply. In teeming industrial centres where men are working three shifts a day the theatres are hardly adequate to the demands upon their space and time. Thus, in every part of the nation, and in connection with every phase of war work, the screen must meet an increasing demand to serve the essential recreational needs of the men and women producing the materials of war.

"For more than a year and a half—from the fall of France to Pearl Harbor—the American motion picture industry, unitedly and wholeheartedly, supported this nation's defense program," Mr. Hays said. "Now we are vigorously sponsoring an all-out victory effort."

Within a week after Japan's attack, industry leaders "streamlined" the Motion Picture Committee Co-operating for National Defense, changed its name to War Activities Committee—Motion Picture Industry, and pledged all-out co-operation to the Commander in Chief in the fight for freedom. The scope and volume of the industry's war activities are indicated by the following:

The 11 national distributors of theatrical motion pictures have presented to the War Department without cost 1,200 programs of current feature pictures and short subjects for gratis showing to our soldiers in combat areas overseas. Film manufacturers donated the millions of feet of raw stock needed for this service. Distributors and exhibitors have co-operated in working out procedures at home under which the entire product of Hollywood studios is made available to the U.S. Army Motion Picture Service, on mutually acceptable terms, for exhibition in Army post theatres which will exceed 650 in number by mid-year. Similar arrangements provide current films for the Navy and Coast Guard on ship and shore.

More than 12,000 exhibitors have signed pledges of co-operation agreeing to include in their film programs any pictures sent to them with the approval of the program committee of the Theatres Division of the War Activities Committee.

441 Warner Men In Military Service

Warner Bros. employees inducted or enlisted in military service to date total 441, exclusive of actors and other studio personnel. With other departures scheduled, the number will pass 500 before the end of this month.

From New York departments alone, 75 have reported for war duty thus far. To keep their memory alive while away, Ralph W. Budd, personnel manager at the home office, is putting up a special flag for each soldier in the h.o. cafeteria. The soldier's name is stamped under a blue star on his flag.

Rogers to Navy

Charles (Buddy) Rogers, husband of Mary Pickford, has joined the American Navy for training as a volunteer flying instructor.

Rogers has been busy as a film player and orchestra leader.

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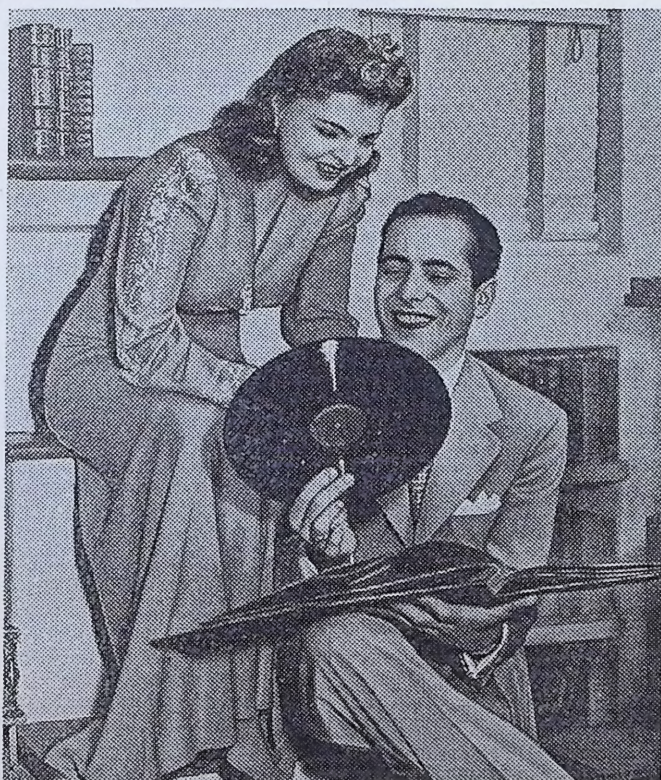
John Kimbrough hemmed in by Virginia Gilmore and Arleen Whelan. They're all in 20th-Fox's "Sundown Jim."



Lee Bowman and Marsha Hunt seem to have it for each other in MGM's "Kid Glove Killer."



Gene Tierney gives it to Laird Cregar while Henry Fonda looks on. It's a scene in the new Twentieth Century-Fox comedy, "Rings On Her Fingers."



HUMPHREY BOGART and MAYO METHOT—in private life simply the agreeable Mr. and Mrs. Bogart—have what is probably the biggest collection of records, all the way from classic music to swing, in the Film Capital. Bogart's next starring vehicle is Warners' sensational "All Through the Night" directed by Vincent Sherman.



Lynn Bari, who thrills moviegoers in 20th-Fox's "Secret Agent of Japan."



Donna Reed starts out as a plain little girl but goes glamorous under the direction of her new wooer, Andy Hardy, in MGM's "The Courtship of Andy Hardy."